

NHPA Amendments of 1992

Jerry L. Rogers

On October 30 the President signed legislation that included the National Historic Preservation Act Amendments of 1992. This was the culmination of several years of effort by historic preservationists, primarily in state and local government and the private sector, to make significant changes in the law. Ideas, some supported by the National Park Service and some not, had been threshed out in countless committee meetings of the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers and in other forums. The resulting bill was introduced by former senator Wyche Fowler of Georgia in the 101st Congress and reintroduced with modifications in the 102nd Congress by Fowler and Congressman Charles Bennett of Florida. Major modifications continued to be made in the House and Senate committees and in conference between the two houses. Few, if any, historic preservation bills had been the subject of so much effort by the time the President signed this one into law.

Although the minor changes are numerous, the major ones can be grouped into three areas: relationships with State Historic Preservation Officers, Tribal Historic Preservation Programs, and Preservation Technology. The law defines the duties of State Historic Preservation Officers (SHPOs) more comprehensively than before, but in ways that basically confirm traditional NPS management of the federal-state partnership. NPS is now authorized to fund and maintain the partnership through contracts and cooperative agreements, but it is not yet certain that there would be advantage in using such devices rather than the current grant relationship. A clear and strong authority to develop historic preservation programs among Indian tribes became law, with the support of NPS, the SHPOs, and other partners. If tribal programs meet prescribed standards, they can assume the roles heretofore played by SHPOs with regard to tribal lands. The Center for Preservation Technology and Training was established and was situated at Northwestern State University of Louisiana at Natchitoches. The WASO Cultural Resource programs have developed a "Statement of Program Approach" which offers a preliminary and informal interpretation of each change, and suggests the ways in which

NPS proposed to implement them. The Statement is being circulated to SHPOs, federal agencies, local governments, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and other partners. Their comments will be considered before NPS begins to draft the formal changes in regulations, guidelines, and other documents by which the law will be implemented.

It is anticipated that the Center for Preservation Technology and Training will become the long-needed cultural Resource Research Program. Growing out of a 1986 study by the Congressional Office of Technology Assessment, the Center is an entirely new entity within the Department of the Interior that is to conduct, coordinate, and financially support research, technology transfer, and training in the field of historic preservation. It is to meet needs of national park units, other agencies, states, local governments, Indian tribes, and the private sector—in other words, to support the full historic preservation mission of the NPS. By means of a Preservation Technology and Training Board, the Center is expected to draw upon the strength and knowledge of a wide range of disciplines and institutions as it decides which preservation problems to tackle, and in what order. Implementers are intent upon making it a major gain for historic preservation, which means that it must supplement, rather than supplant, current activities in research, technology transfer, and training. Both the Service and Northwestern State University are strongly and enthusiastically committed to the program. Its location at Natchitoches puts it in the oldest European town in the Louisiana Purchase, and in the heart of colonial-era competition between Spain, France, and England for domination of North America.

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Publications

AIC Journal

The American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works announces *The 1993 Journal of the American Institute for Conservation*. The *Journal* contains articles on current issues and technical procedures. Topics focus on the conservation of books and paper, paintings, photographic materials, sculpture, wooden artifacts, objects, ethnographic materials, archeological objects, and architectural materials.

For information on subscription rates as well as obtaining back issues and cumulative indexes of the *Journal*, contact the American Institute for Conservation of Historic & Artistic Works, 1400 16th Street, NW, Suite 340, Washington, DC 20036; 202-232-6636; fax: 202-232-6630.

Canal Guide

A field guide to the historic canals and navigable rivers of Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, and the District of Columbia is now available from the American Canal Society. This is the fifth in the society's American Bicentennial series of regional inventories of the Nation's historic canal resources, *The American Canal Guide*.

Part five covers 506 miles of towpath canals and over 1,800 miles of upland river navigation. Altogether, 508 locks and lock locations have been identified in this region. It is essential to know where these historic canal resources are if they are to be used for parks, historical research, and archeological studies.

The goal of the American Canal Guide series is to provide park planners, historians, and canal enthusiasts with a basic inventory of America's historic canal resources for research, preservation, restoration, and the creation of parks, trails, and open space.

The guide has 31 pp, 65 illustrations and maps, and costs \$3.00 ppd. Order from ACS Sales, 2240 Ridgeway Ave., Rochester, NY 14626.

For information on the American Canal Society, or to apply for membership, write to Charles W. Derr, Secretary-Treasurer, 117 Main Street, Freemansburg, PA 18017.